

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present U.S. Patent application.
Claims 1-24 are pending.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-5, 10-13, 15-21, 23 and 24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,959,989 A issued to Gleeson et al. in view of Biedron, W.S., ("Metropolitan Area Network Services Comprised of Virtual Local Area Networks Running over Hybrid-Fiber/Coax and Asynchronous Transfer Mode Technologies", Proceedings of SPIE, vol. 2609, Oct. 23, 1995, p. 50-57, XP002049372).

Claim 1 recites the following:

a metropolitan area network (MAN);
a first VLAN and a second VLAN, wherein the second VLAN comprises the first VLAN;
and
a switch coupled to the MAN and the first and second VLANs to receive from the first VLAN a data packet having a first VLAN ID associated with the first VLAN, to replace the first VLAN ID with a second VLAN ID associated with the second VLAN, wherein the second VLAN ID is different from the first VLAN ID, and to forward the modified data packet from the first VLAN to the MAN.

Claims 12, 18, and 20 similarly recite a switch coupled to a MAN to replace a first VLAN ID associated with a first VLAN with a second VLAN ID associated with a second VLAN, wherein the second VLAN comprises the first VLAN, and to forward the modified data packet from the first VLAN to the MAN.

The Office Action states that neither Gleeson nor Biedron teaches the second VLAN comprising the first VLAN. The Office Action then states that this limitation is descriptive material that does not distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art and that the conversion of one ID to another ID would be performed the same regardless of what network comprised of

another network. Applicants respectfully disagree. Each element recited in a claim limits the claim. As is clearly set forth in Section 706.02(j) of the M.P.E.P., the prior art references when combined **must teach all limitations of the claims** under examination in order to establish a prima facie case of obviousness. The cited references, Gleeson and Biedron, do not teach all the limitations of claims 1, 12, 18, or 20. As stated in the Office Action, neither Gleeson nor Biedron teaches the second VLAN comprising the first VLAN. Neither Gleeson nor Biedron teaches a switch coupled to a MAN and the first and second VLANs to replace in a data packet the first VLAN ID associated with the first VLAN with a second VLAN ID associated with the second VLAN and to forward the modified data packet to the MAN. Therefore, Gleeson and Biedron, whether taken individually or in combination, do not render claims 1, 12, 18, and 20 obvious.

Claims 2-11, 13-17, 19, and 21-24 are dependent claims and distinguish for at least the same reasons as their independent base claim in addition to adding further limitations of their own. Therefore, Applicant submits that claims 2-11, 13-17, 19, and 21-24 are patentable over Gleeson and Biedron for at least the reasons set forth above.

Claims 6-9, 14 and 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Gleeson et al. in view of Biedron, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,181,699B1 issued to Crinion et al.

As discussed above, neither Gleeson nor Biedron discloses the limitations recited in claims 1, 12, 18, and 20. The Office Action states that Crinion teaches the first and second VLAN ID obtained from a header encapsulating the data packet, and the header is an IEEE 802.1Q frame tag. Whether or not Crinion teaches these features, Crinion does not teach a switch coupled to a MAN to replace a first VLAN ID associated with a first VLAN with a second VLAN ID associated with a second VLAN, wherein the second VLAN comprises the first

VLAN, and to forward the modified data packet from the first VLAN to the MAN, as recited in claims 1, 12, 18, and 20. Therefore, Crinion does not cure the deficiencies of Gleeson and Biedron. Thus, Applicants submit that no combination of Gleeson, Biedron, and Crinion renders claims 1, 12, 18, and 20 obvious.

Claims 2-11, 13-17, 19, and 21-24 are dependent claims and distinguish for at least the same reasons as their independent base claim in addition to adding further limitations of their own. Therefore, Applicants submit that claims 2-11, 13-17, 19, and 21-24 are patentable over Gleeson, Biedron, and Crinion for at least the reasons set forth above.

Conclusion

In view of the remarks set forth above, Applicants submit that claims 1-24 are in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully solicited. The Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is believed that such contact would further the examination of the present application.

Please charge any shortages and credit any overcharges to our Deposit Account number 02-2666.

Respectfully submitted,
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Date: 1/23/04



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